

Message Text

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63

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 201610Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3241

INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USINT CAIRO

S E C R E T TUNIS 5486

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1 DECLASS. IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE DATE

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, TS, JO

SUBJECT: TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT BELIEF THAT KING HUSSEIN
PLANNING ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA

1. DURING CONVERSATION WITH HABIB BOURGUIBA, JR. SEPT. 19, LATTER INFORMED ME "ON CONFIDENTIAL BASIS" THAT TUNISIANS IN POSSESSION OF REPORT THAT KING HUSSEIN HAS ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS TO HIS SUBORDINATES TO ARRANGE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA. TUNISIAN REPORT COMES FROM LONDON WHERE KING HUSSEIN IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE MET WITH GROUP OF JORDANIANS WHO ARE STRONGLY PRO-HASHIMITE. ACCORDING TO BOURGUIBA, JR., THIS REPORT WAS REASON THAT PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA TALKED OF HIS POSSIBLE DEATH IN COMMENTS TO PRESS TWO WEEKS BEFORE HE LEFT FOR ALGIERS.

2. BOURGUIBA, JR. SAID THAT YASSIR ARAFAT, WHOM PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA SAW WHEN HE WAS VISITING QADHAFI IN TRIPOLI, "CONFIRMED" ACCURACY OF TUNISIAN INTELLIGENCE REPORT. ARAFAT CLAIMED THAT HE HAD SENT WORD TO JORDANIANS THAT IF BOURGUIBA WERE KNOCKED OFF, FEDAYEEN WOULD RE-
SECRET

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TALIAE AGAINST HUSSEIN.

3. BOURGUIBA, JR. SAID THAT TUNISIANS KNEW THAT KING HUSSEIN WAS VERY UPSET AT BOURGUIBA'S REMARKS CONCERNING

JORDAN BEING TURNED OVER TO PALESTINIANS. FOR THIS REASON
THEY TEND TO CREDIT REPORT RE ASSASSINATION PLOT. HOWEVER,
BOURGUIBA, JR. RECOGNIZED THAT REPORT MIGHT BE BASED ON
PASSING REMARK MADE BY KING HUSSEIN IN MOMENT OF ANGER, WITHOUT
THERE BEING ANY SERIOUS INTENTION OF ARRANGING ASSASSINATION.
IN ANY CASE, HE SAID GOT WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING ANY
INFORMATION USG HAD ON SUBJECT.

4. IS AID THAT I WAS UNAWARE OF ANY SUCH PLOT AND THAT I
DOUBTED ITS VERACITY. I SAID I CERTAINLY WOULD GIVE NO
CREDENCE TO ANYTHING ARAFAT HAD TO SAY AND THAT ARAFAT'S
BELIEF IN EXISTENCE OF SUCH PLOT OBVIOUSLY SELF-SERVING.

5. COMMENT: REPORT OF ASSASSINATION PLOT BY HUSSEIN
SEEMS RIDICULOUSLY FAR-FETCHED BUT BOURGUIBA, JR. OBVIOUSLY
REFLECTED GENUINE TUNISIAN CONCERN AND FOR THIS REASON
I AM REPORTING IT FOR THE RECORD.
SEELYE

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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